

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
13 December 1984

JENNINGS: Good evening. The two Americans who survived < HIJACKING> the hijacking of that Kuwaiti airliner to Iran are now back in the United States. John Costa and Charles Kapar came directly from a hospital in West Germany. Here's ABC's Dennis Troute.

TROUTE: While both hijack victims arrived from Germany at New York's Kennedy Airport, waiting newsman saw only one, 50-year-old John Costa, his head covered with a woolen cap. The State Department had cleared him through customs on the plane, so he moved quickly into a limousine, destination unknown. U.S. AID employee Charles Kapar arrived late in the afternoon to a flag-studded welcome of family and neighbors at his home just outside Washington. En route home, he told an ABC reporter to 'thank America.' But after arrival, he had some surprisingly kind words for Iran as well. CHARLES KAPAR: All I could say is what I experienced. They were good to me; they helped me; they saved my life. I don't care about the politics or the diplomacy or anything like that. All I'm concerned with is that they saved me.

TROUTE: Kapar was asked whether Americans are too often victims of terrorism overseas. KAPAR: It's terrible when an American can't travel around the world without anyone bothering him, just because he's an American. Are we all CIA? That's the question that has to be answered. We're just ordinary employees of the government.

TROUTE: At the State Department, spokesman Alan Romberg had a different view of Iranian behavior. He responded angrily to charges from Iran's prime minister that aggressive U.S. policies had caused American deaths during the hijacking. ALAN ROMBERG: I think that's sick.

TROUTE: In fact, U.S. experts are increasingly convinced the hijackers and Iranian authorities acted in collusion. Intelligence sources say these are the main factors in their analysis. First, suspicious radio conversations between the hijackers and the airport tower in Tehran. Easily monitored by Western intelligence, these provided the first strong indication that the hijackers and the authorities might be in league. Second, the storming of the plane looked phony to experts, like something acted out, rather than a real fight between commandos and hijackers. Finally, sources say some of the same hijackers who blew up a French airliner in Tehran last August staged the Kuwaiti airliner incident last week. French intelligence has told Washington that. And Iran's former president, Banni Sadr, says his sources agree. State Department officials say they still hope to see the hijackers on trial, though they don't really expect that to happen. Officials expect to ask survivors, such as Charles Kapar, for more details about the hijacking. For him, of course, the most important detail now is that it's over and he's home. Dennis Troute, ABC News, the State Department. <